

Affordable Housing Trust Group Agreements

- **Be fully present**
Limit distractions, show up as fully as possible to the extent that you are able. Take care of yourself as needed.
- **Use “I” statements (speak based on your own experience)**
Speak from your own experience, where you’re coming from, rather than projecting your experience onto others. Frame your comments about how you are thinking and feeling, and avoid making assumptions about others and how they are feeling.
- **Take space, make space**
If you’ve been speaking a lot, consider listening to others. If you often talk a lot, make sure to share information geared toward the goal of the meeting. If you have not spoken up much, consider speaking up/contributing. Every member’s input is valuable.
- **Share the lesson, not the story (although if there’s time, it’s helpful to hear the story)**
Focus on sharing outcomes and lessons learned. If there is time, sharing the story can be helpful for context and visualize the issue/concern.
- **One microphone**
Talking over others can be very disruptive to the flow of the conversation. If someone is talking, it is important to recognize that they have the proverbial mic and wait for them to finish before you respond or join in.
- **Joint inquiry over advocacy**
Approach our work together as a process of inquiry together and sharing our perspectives. There is a time and a place for advocacy, but we should prioritize exploration of opportunities instead of a competing over ideas.
- **Use simple, accessible language, avoid jargon or acronyms**
Please use simple, accessible language and avoid jargons and undefined acronyms. If you use an acronym, make sure to define it for the group.
- **Listen for understanding**
Focus on listening and appreciating what others are trying to say, not only what you are hearing.
- **Offer what you can, don’t be afraid to ask for what you need**
You are responsible for your actions and for ideas you share. You are also responsible for taking care of yourself in the meeting.
- **Lean into the edges**
Some of our conversations might put us at the end of our comfort zone and trying on new ideas. Some of these conversations might be uncomfortable, and each of us might experience that during a meeting. If you’re experiencing discomfort, that’s okay. It is often a sign of growth.
- **Seek to build consensus, but accept and expect lack of closure**
We are not always going to solve problems or come to final conclusions in a single meeting. There may be ideas, concepts, conversations that we may want to go deeper with. We hope to be able to do that in

future meetings, but it's important to acknowledge that it may not always happen in the span of a single meeting.

- **Think outside the box**

Sometimes we are used to thinking of certain structures or frameworks for our work. Dare to think outside the structures we are used to and unlock your creative energy.

- **Dare to dream**

Be bold with your ideas and dare to dream big.

- **Everyone contributes energy to this space**

We each have our own experience and mood that we contribute to our meeting space. We welcome different energy and strongly feel it will get us closer to our desired outcome.

- **Mutual respect, always**

We respect each other as individuals, and for the perspective that we each bring to our discussions.

Adopted 11/18/2021

Arlington AHTF Governing Documents and Municipal Affordable Housing Trust Fund Reference Materials

- [Title II, Article 14 of the Town Bylaw](#) (Affordable Housing Trust Fund & Board of Trustees, ART. 8, STM 11/18/2020)
- [Municipal Affordable Housing Trust Fund Guidebook v.3](#), published by Massachusetts Housing Partnership
- [Municipal Affordable Housing Trust Fund Operations Manual](#), published by Massachusetts Housing Partnership
- [Arlington Affordable Housing Trust Fund Board Webpage](#)

Other Relevant Reference Materials

- [Massachusetts Open Meeting Law Guide and Educational Materials](#), published by Attorney General Maura Healey (includes statute, regulations and guidance)
- [Summary of the Conflict of Interest Law for Municipal Employees](#), State Ethics Commission
- [July 28 Virtual Public Forum and General Listening Session](#), presentation slides